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The Goose Creek Line



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When the Circus Came to Town, 3 acts, 2½ hrs. (25c)	5 3

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago

THE GOOSE CREEK LINE

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

BY

CARABEL LEWIS MUNGER

AUTHOR OF

"Just Like a Woman."



CHICAGO
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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11/11/1916

THE GOOSE CREEK LINE

CHARACTERS.

FREDERICK FIELDING	<i>Putting in the Line. In Love with Thankful</i>
DANIEL DUTTON ...	<i>Wealthy Farmer. Largest Stockholder</i>
REUBEN ROGERS.	<i>Fine Young Farmer, in Love with Marjorie</i>
MARJORIE DUTTON	<i>Daniel's Daughter. Always Interrupting her Pa</i>
MARY ANN DUTTON	<i>Daniel's Wife. Very Kind but a Scold</i>
MISS THANKFUL THELANDER	<i>School Teacher, Boards with the Duttons</i>
MISS CAROLINE FIELDING	<i>Frederick's Sister, a Matchmaker</i>
MRS. MINERVA BATTLES	<i>A Widow Who Gossips and Keeps Turkeys</i>
LITTLE WIMPIE WIGGINS	<i>A Homeless Child. Very Precocious. Lives with Mrs. Battles</i>
MRS. SMITH	<i>Neighbors Who Attend Social Circle</i>
MRS. WOODWARD	
MRS. DRAKE	
MRS. ALLEN	

PLACE—*Goose Creek Hollow.*

TIME OF PLAYING " Hour.

~~TMF 96 006972~~

ACT I. Living room of the Dutton home.

ACT II. Living room of Mrs. Battles a few days later.

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COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

FREDERICK—Well dressed. Business suit, neat and up to date.

DANIEL—For Act I: Wears overalls, patched and rather short, blue and white checked shirt, red handkerchief tied about neck, heavy shoes, torn hat. For Act II: Good business suit with rather large derby hat. Wears hat all the time.

MARJORIE DUTTON—Act I: Pretty house dress, rather short and slightly low neck, very dainty white apron, hair in braid with white ribbon bow, white silk stockings and pumps, gold chain and pendant. Has dark checked apron to put on when required. Act II: Any pretty afternoon costume, dark spectacles. Should look, at all times, as winsome and attractive as possible.

MARY ANN DUTTON—Short gingham dress, very full skirt starched very stiff, low shoes, white stockings, large gingham apron with bib, hair combed back very tight, done up in outstanding knob, wears spectacles on top of head when not in use. For Act II: Dark skirt and coat and sunbonnet.

REUBEN ROGERS—Act I: Blue negligee shirt, neck turned in, sleeves rolled up to elbows, old shoes, old straw hat with hole in crown. Act II: Neatly dressed, carries leather bag and umbrella.

MRS. BATTLES—Act I: Dark dress, gingham apron and sunbonnet. Act II: Light house dress, large white apron and white collar.

WIMPIE WIGGINS—Barefooted or very poor shoes and stockings, very short, faded dress, patched and torn. Wimpy should not be over eight years old and must be a child who is not afraid and who will speak very loudly and in a pert manner.

THANKFUL THELANDER and CAROLINE FIELDING—Well but not elaborately dressed. No wraps.

MRS. SMITH, MRS. WOODWARD, MRS. DRAKE and MRS. ALLEN—Well dressed farm women and wearing coats and hats. Each carries some sort of handy work bag.

PROPERTIES.

Dark apron, plate of candy and dark glasses for Marjorie. Piece of fancy work for Thankful. Leather bag and umbrella for Reuben. Needlework and crochet work for Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Woodward, Mrs. Drake and Mrs. Allen. Telephone and telephone directory.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R., means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *D.*, door, etc.; *upstage*, away from footlights; *downstage*, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

THE GOOSE CREEK LINE

ACT I.

SCENE: *Living room in DANIEL DUTTON'S farm house. Center table with oil lamp on red mat, photograph album and conch shell. Couch covered with old blue coverlid or patchwork quilt. A piano if possible. One rocking chair with pieced cushion cover. Clock with almanac hung near by. Several plain chairs. Telephone on wall, directory hanging near by. Doors R. and L. Also C. if desired. Entrances may be arranged to suit stage convenience.*

At rise, THANKFUL is discovered seated in rocker, sewing on a piece of embroidery.

Enter CAROLINE.

THANKFUL. Good morning, Miss Fielding. Why are you looking so sober? Sit down, do, and see my centerpiece. I shall have it done by night if I keep busy.

CAROLINE. It is very handsome, but I thought you would be at school.

THANKFUL. They are putting a new floor in the school-house, so there is no school for a few days. But what is the matter? You look despondent.

CAROLINE. I am feeling despondent. Mrs. Dutton says that Frederick and I must find a new boarding place, and just as everything was going so nicely.

THANKFUL. So nicely. What do you mean? No doubt your brother could look after the completion of the line as well elsewhere as here.

CAROLINE. I am not thinking of the completion of the line. I am thinking of dear Frederick's personal affairs. My brother finds this place very attractive.

THANKFUL. Indeed. Well, I have to leave also. I am going to board with the Widow Battles. No doubt she would take you, too. Mrs. Dutton expects thrashers, and

she can't find room for us all. How soon will the line be finished?

CAROLINE. The instruments are nearly all in. They are putting in the switchboards this morning and we may get a call here at any time. (*Looks at telephone.*) This has been such an experience, my staying here. I didn't suppose there was such a back-woodsy place left in the United States till we came down here.

THANKFUL. Well, I think their old-fashioned ways are perfectly delightful. I just love to hear Mrs. Dutton tell what we are going to have for dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Dutton both seem just like people out of a book, so simple and so kind. No one would dream that they were wealthy.

CAROLINE. Wealthy! I must tell my brother. Of course you have noticed his interest in Marjorie.

THANKFUL. Marjorie! Why she is only seventeen years old, and young Mr. Rogers is very attentive to her.

CAROLINE. What, Reuben? Marjorie would look higher than that country clodhopper.

THANKFUL. Reuben is a bright, shrewd young man. He has been to Agricultural School and he has a fine large farm of his own.

CAROLINE. Well, just the same I call him a great blunderbuss. (*Rises.*) I will find my brother and tell him what you said about Mr. Dutton being a rich man. (*Exit.*)

THANKFUL. Goodness, what a fortune hunter. And I have been foolish enough to think that Mr. Fielding was interested in me.

MRS. DUTTON (*off stage*). Daniel! Daniel!

Enter MRS. DUTTON, who runs to center of stage and then returns to door.

MRS. DUTTON (*calls from door*). Daniel! Daniel! Dan Dutton! You mozy along in here. (*Returns and addresses THANKFUL.*) I never in all this living world saw a man who knew so little as Dan Dutton. If he was a child I would larrup him good. He ought to be walloped.

THANKFUL. What has he done now?

MRS. DUTTON. Done? He ain't done nothing. I've made

signs to him (*makes beckoning sign with finger*), I've wonk at him, and the old simpleton just simply won't take the hint.

THANKFUL. But why this extreme anxiety to get Mr. Dutton into the house?

MRS. DUTTON. Reuben is out in the garden with Marjorie, and they want to talk a little as young folks will.

THANKFUL. Yes.

MRS. DUTTON. And what do you think? Daniel won't let Reuben get a word in edgeways. He stands with his hand on Reuben's shoulder and a-asting him how many bushels of oats to the acre his piece above the medder was likely to go, and when Reuben spoke to Marjorie about going for a walk in the orchard, Daniel said he would go with Reuben and git him a basket of greasy pippins, and he even told Marjorie to go in the house and rid up the room. What do you think of that?

THANKFUL. Well, forever more.

MRS. DUTTON (*running to door*). I'll see if I can't git that man in here. Daniel! Daniel! Dan Dutton, you come right straight in here. The cat is in a fit!

Enter DANIEL, REUBEN and MARJORIE, on a run. All hunt for the cat. MRS. DUTTON retreats to back of stage in disgust. THANKFUL laughs.

DANIEL. Where is she? Where is the critter? Prob'bly she's got the hydrophobus. Mary Ann, you run and git my revolver. It's upstairs in an old stocking, between the springs and mattress on the high-post bed.

MARJORIE. No, no! Daddy! I won't have my cat shot. (*MARJORIE and REUBEN search.*) Where is she, ma?

DANIEL. Mary Ann, where is she, and how was she took?

REUBEN. She seems to have gone—vanished in thin air. (*Exit MRS. DUTTON.*)

DANIEL (*still searching*). I thought the cat acted kinder pindling this morning. She only et two sassers of milk. Where is she?

MRS. DUTTON (*comes to door*). Come into the kitchen, Daniel, and I'll tell you where the cat is.

DANIEL. You've got me in here, and now you want to git me out. I never seen such a womern. I shan't go a step. (MRS. DUTTON *beckons and leaves doorway*.)

MARJORIE (*gets down and looks under THANKFUL's chair*) Oh, where is my poor little kitten?

THANKFUL. I wouldn't worry about the cat if I were you, Marjorie. No doubt she has recovered.

MRS. DUTTON (*off stage*). Daniel! Daniel!

DANIEL. Just hear that womern yell. Marjorie, go and see what your ma wants. I expect any minute this line will be done, and if anyone should foam in here I want to be on the spot.

MARJORIE. You don't mean foam, daddie. You mean phone. (*Spells.*) P-h-o-n-e, phone. (*Taps DANIEL on the arm at each letter.*)

MRS. DUTTON (*off stage*). Daniel! Daniel!

DANIEL. Just hear her go on. Anyone would think the house was on fire.

MRS. DUTTON (*in doorway*). Daniel, the chimbly is burning out!

DANIEL. Let her burn, mother.

Enter MRS. DUTTON, *seizes DANIEL by the arm and runs off stage, pulling him with her*. THANKFUL *retires to chair at side of stage and resumes sewing*. MARJORIE and REUBEN *occupy center front, standing*.

REUBEN. I must be going if I am to get into town before the butcher goes to dinner.

MARJORIE. Are you going into town in that hat?

REUBEN (*removes hat and runs hand out through hole in crown*). What is the matter with this hat? It's cool, and it's paid for.

MARJORIE. It looks as if it had been paid for ages ago. You see I have become so used to seeing Mr. Fielding well dressed all the time, that it looks queer to see you going into town in those old clothes. Mr. Fielding noticed you at the Farmers' Institute sitting up front in your old coat

and no collar, and he said that you were rightly named, especially the Reuben part. And I was so mortified at your familiarity.

REUBEN. Familiarity? What did I do?

MARJORIE. Didn't you stop and pull my ear and say, "Hello, Muggins," in an awful whisper? I was so mortified. Every one looked around and I thought I should sink right through the floor.

REUBEN. Well, I came into town after some butter color and a whetstone. I had my old duds on because I didn't know about the Institute 'til I got down there. I went up into the hall just to see you, and there you sat between Mr. Fielding and his silly sister. I was a good mind to take him out and throw him into Goose Creek. I wish I had; the blasted old popinjay!

MARJORIE. Oh, Reuben! I didn't think you would swear in my presence.

REUBEN. Popinjay isn't swearing.

MARJORIE. But blasted is.

THANKFUL. Come, come, children; don't quarrel. Is the line finished up your way, Reuben?

REUBEN. All done and named.

THANKFUL. Fine. What have they named it?

REUBEN. The Goose Creek Line.

MARJORIE. Horrors! The Goose Creek Line? I wanted it called the Forest Glen Line, or the Melody Lane Line, or the Fern Avenue Line. Who suggested such an atrocious name as Goose Creek Line?

REUBEN. I did. I let them cut the poles for the whole line in my swamp free, and they said I might name the line. It follows Goose Creek right up the valley, so I called it the Goose Creek Line. I thought that the name ought to mean something.

MARJORIE. Forest Glen would mean something. The valley is a glen, isn't it? And it leads through a forest?

REUBEN. Yes. Four trees on one side and three on the other, to say nothing of the old tamarack by the graveyard, and the crab apple bush at Apple Sass Crossing.

MARJORIE. Oh, Reuben, don't say apple sass.

REUBEN. Don't blame me. I didn't name it. My mother said that they called it Apple Sass Crossing because of the old tavern which used to stand at the forks of the road. It seems they used to dish up apple sass with everything.

MARJORIE. Dish up. Why can't you say served? Now why can't you call the line Melody Lane Line? (*Puts hand on REUBEN'S arm, looks at him coaxingly.*) Didn't you hear a chorus of bird melody when you drove through there this morning?

REUBEN. No, honestly I didn't; but I brought in two veal calves and they blatted all the way down, and I had a log chain in the wagon, and that joined in the chorus, and that was all the melody I heard.

MARJORIE. But there are ferns, Reuben. You know there are ferns. It will spoil all my pleasure if they call it Goose Creek Line. (*Removes hand from arm.*)

REUBEN. Yes, I know, Marjorie, there is a clump of brakes on Sassafras Knoll; but it is too late to change. Goose Creek Line is printed in the franchise and the directories are ready to deliver.

Enter DANIEL and MRS. DUTTON, CAROLINE and FREDERICK FIELDING. CAROLINE and FREDERICK say "good morning" to REUBEN, who responds, and FREDERICK shakes hands with THANKFUL. FREDERICK does not wear hat as he is supposed to come from his room in the house.

FREDERICK. Congratulate me, Miss Schoolma'am. The line will soon be done. Don't you want a phone put into the schoolhouse so you may call in the board of education in case the big boys get unruly?

THANKFUL. Oh, no; thank you. My boys are all good, and one trustee is all we can boast of. But I do congratulate you. I suppose you and Caroline will be leaving here soon.

FREDERICK. We shall remain about two weeks longer, and I am sorry to hear that Mrs. Dutton can't keep us after Saturday. (*Looks languishingly at THANKFUL.*) I find this place very attractive.

CAROLINE. Can't you keep us for a couple of weeks longer, Mrs. Dutton?

MRS. DUTTON. I would, but Pa has got to go to Buffalo with a carload of cattle to sell, and Marjorie and I must clean this house. (*Dusts chair with apron.*) Then the blinds have got to be painted, and there will be the painter to board. Then the thrashers is coming (*dusts table while talking*), and there will be eleven men to four meals, and after them the silo fillers, nine men for three days; and after them the hay pressers, seven men staying right along day and night for a week, and after them the wood choppers—

THANKFUL (*interrupting*). Don't tell us how long the wood choppers are likely to stay, or what comes after them. How will you ever get enough cooked for them all to eat? I should be afraid so many hungry men would eat me up.

MRS. DUTTON. Well, they might if I was young and tender like you, Thankful, but I shan't get them anything 'laborate; just plain meals.

FREDERICK. What, for instance? (MRS. DUTTON *continues to dust at intervals.*)

MRS. DUTTON. Well, as a sample for breakfast, oatmeal and cream and sugar or honey for them as prefers it, then graham gems, and buckwheat pancakes, with fried pork and maple molasses, two kinds of cookies and jell and pickles—

DANIEL. (*interrupting*). And sauerkraut, mother, and apple pie.

MRS. DUTTON. Sauerkraut and apple pie, of course. Just a plain farmer's breakfast.

THANKFUL. Give us a sample dinner.

MRS. DUTTON. Well, I'll say roast beef browned down in the kettle, mashed potatoes and brown gravy, of course, and squash and mashed turnip, pickled beets and coldslaw, brown bread and white bread, and butter, tomato chowder, apple butter, coffee, and buttermilk of course, for them as craves it, two kinds of pie, and cookies of course, caraway cookies with a raisin in the middle—

FREDERICK. And is that all?

DANIEL. Yes; just a plain, common farmer's dinner.

THANKFUL. I beg of you, Mrs. Dutton, don't tell what you think of giving them for supper.

FREDERICK. It's my opinion there won't any of them live 'til supper.

Enter WIMPIE WIGGINS on a run.

WIMPIE. It's done! It's done!

ALL. Oh, is it?

WIMPIE. And I ran all the way down here to tell you.

FREDERICK. I wonder that they don't ring in here. I told them to call me first.

WIMPIE. And it's real long, too.

DANIEL (*pats WIMPIE on the head*). It reaches quite a distance, little gal.

WIMPIE. And to think it came near being cut off too short.

FREDERICK. What do you mean, child?

WIMPIE. It would have been only Miss Albro came in and measured it.

REUBEN (*much astonished*). She did? Miss Albro measured it?

WIMPIE. Yes, and it is just as good as new.

DANIEL (*advances toward FREDERICK and shakes finger at him sternly*). Now look here, Mr. Fielding, if this line hain't new we won't have it. Goose Holler is just as good as Cabob Flats, and they had a new line over there, and if you put us off with any second-hand contrivances you'll hear from me.

WIMPIE. I s'posed you had all heard that it wasn't new. Miss Elder Simmons give it to me and she had it for the Pan-American, so it ain't so very old.

MARJORIE (*shakes WIMPIE*). What do you mean, Wimpy Wiggins? What are you talking about?

WIMPIE. Why, my new dress, of course. It's done! It's done! (*All laugh.*)

MRS. DUTTON. And we supposed you meant the telephone. You little tyke, to fool us like that.

THANKFUL. I'm very glad that you have a new dress, Wimpie, and I'll get you a new hair ribbon to go with it.

WIMPIE. I'd love a new hair ribbon all to pieces. I never had but one new ribbon and that came around cigars. It was yellow and it wasn't worth a cent neither. I guess I'll run over and tell Miss Simmons that it is done. (*Exit.*)

CAROLINE. Who is that child and where did she come from?

FREDERICK. I've noticed her watching the men at work and wondered whose child she was. She seems real bright.

THANKFUL. She is real bright. A Mrs. Graham took her from the orphan asylum and then she went to Boston to live with her son. She simply left her here with the Widow Battles. It is a shame that she has no real home; she just runs wild. If I had a home I would adopt her myself.

FREDERICK (*to THANKFUL*). Perhaps we can arrange it. (*CAROLINE looks vexed.*)

DANIEL. The Widder Battles couldn't spare her. She keeps her too busy drivin' that flock of one hundred turkeys into my grain fields.

CAROLINE. Come, Frederick, come up stairs and read your letters. (*They start to go and the phone rings one long and three short rings. All look at phone and show much interest. FREDERICK goes to phone and takes down receiver.*)

FREDERICK. Hello! Yes, this is Fielding. Fine! Clear as a bell—I mean a bell phone. Goodby! (*Hangs up receiver.*) And now the line is done. And you, Mr. Dutton, as the largest stockholder, shall be the first to use it.

DANIEL. How do you run the darned thing—up and down like a pump handle, or 'round and 'round like a sassage grinder?

MARJORIE. Oh, daddy, don't say sassage.

DANIEL (*puts one hand on MARJORIE'S shoulder and shakes one finger at her.*) Now, Marjorie, I've sent you away to school, and I've bought you a pianner, and I've put one hundred dollars in the bank for you every birthday

since you was born. Your ma's teased and teased till I've let you wear silk stockings, and I've bought you a gold chain and peanut to wear on your neck—

MARJORIE (*interrupting*). No, daddy. You mean a gold chain and pendant.

DANIEL. Marjorie, I said a gold peanut and I mean a gold peanut. The jeweler he said to me, says he: "Mr. Dutton, here's a gold chain and peanut for twenty-five dollars. Some calls um a dolliver," says he, and I took it. And if you want anything else name it and I'll git it for you; but don't you try to tell your old dad anything about sassage, for I've made hundreds and hundreds of pounds of sassage before you was born.

FREDERICK. Well, sassage or sausage, it is all good stuff. Now, Mr. Dutton, would you care to talk with some of your neighbors? (*While the phoning is being done REUBEN and MARJORIE sit on the couch and converse in whispers, smile, etc.*)

DANIEL. Yes, I'll try her a whack. I want to know if Si Perkins has 'noculated the ground for his alfa. He was going to put in some alfa and you have to 'nuncate for it.

FREDERICK. Go ahead. You ring once for Central and they will get Mr. Perkins for you.

DANIEL (*rings, MRS. DUTTON stands at his elbow, takes her spectacles from the top of her head and polishes them with her apron and puts them on. DANIEL rings again. Then very loudly.*) Is this the Middle? No, this is me! What is it doing? What, all by itself? Wall, I'll be horn-swoggled!

MRS. DUTTON. What did Si say, Pa? (*DANIEL and MRS. DUTTON face each other with much interest.*)

DANIEL. I rung and they said suthin', I don't know what, and I said, "Is this the Middle?" And they said, "Number?" And I said, "No, this is me." And they said, "Line is busy." And I said, "What is it doing?" And they said, "Just talkin'." And I listened and there it was sure enough talking away to itself as chipper as could be.

MRS. DUTTON. What did it say to itself, pa?

DANIEL. It said it as plain as I am talking now.

MARJORIE. What did it say, daddy?

DANIEL. It said, "Shake well before using and apply to the stummick on a flannel cloth."

MRS. DUTTON. And you don't know whose stummick, nor what was in the bottle; wal for all this living world!

FREDERICK. Never mind; you will get used to all this later. Do you want to talk, Mrs. Dutton?

MRS. DUTTON. Me? No! I should say not. I ain't afraid to use it but I must get dinner.

THANKFUL. What are we going to have, Mrs. Dutton?

MRS. DUTTON. Well, I'll tell you what I lay out to have, Thankful. Mashed potatoes, salt fish with thick cream, strawberry preserves, and peach shortcake, tomatoes, and stuffed peppers, dutch cheese, quince jelly, and green corn boiled on the cob. And say, Thankful, don't you want to come and whip some cream and put in some powdered sugar for the shortcake?

THANKFUL. Sure.

MRS. DUTTON. Pa, you get some wood; then you empty that keg of vinegar into the barrel in the cellar; then you put a new leather on the cistern pump, go and see if old speckle has layed yet, and then turn the calves into the orchard. (*Exit DANIEL, looking very dejected, followed by MRS. DUTTON, who pauses in the door.*) Can't you stay to dinner, Reuben?

REUBEN. No; I ought to have gone long ago. (*Mrs. DUTTON exits. REUBEN continues.*) I will be up to go to the donation in the schoolhouse, Marjorie.

THANKFUL. The donation is postponed because the schoolhouse is being repaired.

CAROLINE. And besides, my brother is going to take Marjorie and me into town to the picture show this evening.

REUBEN. All right. I will be up Sunday anyway. (*Exit REUBEN. MARJORIE goes to door and waves her hand. Returns to room.*)

FREDERICK. I thought that perhaps Miss Thelander would like to go.

CAROLINE (*hastily*). Oh, Thankful don't care for the movies.

THANKFUL (*tartly*). I said I wouldn't care to go to them every evening.

Enter Mrs. DUTTON.

MRS. DUTTON. Marjorie, take off your white apron and put on your gingham one and slip up to the garden and get the tomatoes and green corn, and don't you get any tomatoes that ain't dead ripe, and be sure that the corn isn't too big, nor agin too little. Then run down to the spring-house and get the cream and butter, and then feed the little chickens, water the goslings and give the little turkeys some dutch cheese, and you step lively. (*Exit Mrs. DUTTON.* MARJORIE removes and folds white apron, places it on chair back, puts on dark apron and exits.)

FREDERICK. That woman would make a good commander-in-chief. She has set quite a task for them to do before dinner.

THANKFUL. It amuses me to death. And the beauty of it is that they won't do half the things she has told them to, and she knows it. But I must go and whip that cream or I'll hear from her myself. (*Exit.*)

CAROLINE. Oh, Frederick, her father is rich?

FREDERICK (*absent-mindedly*). Is he? What of it?

CAROLINE. I have always wanted you to have a rich wife. She is an only child and I think she likes you.

FREDERICK. I don't know about that, but she is certainly the most attractive girl I have ever met; so quiet and sensible, and so well educated. I had never given her parentage a thought. She might be an orphan for all I know.

CAROLINE. Of course you knew she wasn't an orphan. Now I am going to help you all I can. I will talk to her myself.

FREDERICK. Oh, no; I beg of you, Caroline, do not mention it to her in any way. I will do the talking when the

right time comes; but I am glad you don't object. I had thought that you didn't like her.

CAROLINE. I think she is perfectly sweet, and as pretty as a pink, and so girlish and playful.

FREDERICK. Playful? I never thought of her as playful.

CAROLINE. Well, anyway, you are the best brother in the world to bring me out here. I have had such a lovely vacation I am sorry that the line is done.

FREDERICK. We shall have to stay a while longer. I am glad you have enjoyed it, Caroline, but remember, not a word to her, and as for her father's money, I don't care a fig for it. (*Exit.*)

CAROLINE. How strangely he talked. "Quiet, sensible and well educated." I call her a rather flighty young piece. But Mr. Reuben Rogers don't get her. Frederick shall have her or my name is not Caroline Fielding.

Enter MARJORIE, wearing gingham apron, which she removes and puts on white one.

CAROLINE. Oh, Marjorie, I was just thinking how lovely you would look in a blue silk frock, and a lace collar, and a pearl necklace, and I'm sure my brother thinks so, too.

MARJORIE. I never had a real silk dress.

CAROLINE. And would you like to go to the city to live and go to balls, and luncheons, and theater parties, and ride in automobiles, and never, never have to do any more work?

MARJORIE (*rises and clasps her hands*). Oh, I would just love it! But I know that our folks would never leave dear old Goose Hollow farm. (*Sits.*)

CAROLINE. The girl who marries my brother will have all these things.

MARJORIE. Is your brother so rich, then?

CAROLINE (*hesitates*). He—well—your father would no doubt give you a fine dowry.

MARJORIE (*rises with delight and counts the things off on her finger.*) Oh, yes. Mother says if I should ever marry that I am to have four feather beds, with pillows, and I have got twenty quilts, and I'm to have bushels of sheets

and pillow-slips and towels and things, and you have seen Blossom? She is the lightest colored Jersey in the whole bunch. She's mine. And so is the black colt with the white star in his forehead; and both dogs are mine; and everything in the west bedroom is mine. And I'm to have my great-grandmother's spinning wheel. Of course I can't spin, but then it will be lovely to have, and mother says—

CAROLINE (*aside*). Four feather beds. Heavens! Yes, yes; that will be fine, and don't you want to go for an auto ride with Frederick and myself Sunday?

MARJORIE. Yes, but Reuben was coming up.

CAROLINE. I will phone and tell him not to come.

MARJORIE. I don't know as you—

CAROLINE (*rushes to phone, takes down directory, which should hang by instrument. Rings.*) Give me 12K31. Is this Reuben? Marjorie says not to call on her Sunday. She is going to the city with Mr. Fielding.

MARJORIE (*comes and places hand on CAROLINE's arm*). And with Miss Fielding. Tell him you are going, too. Tell him.

CAROLINE (*shakes off arm*). Yes, this is Miss Fielding. Since you ask I think she is rather tired of your company. Yes, I'll tell her. (*Hangs up receiver.*)

MARJORIE. Oh, what have you done? What did Reuben say?

CAROLINE. He said that he should not trouble you Sunday, or ever.

MARJORIE (*stamps foot*). Well, if he feels like that, let him go.

Enter DANIEL, MRS. DUTTON and THANKFUL. Phone rings as they enter. MARJORIE answers.

MARJORIE. Yes, this is Marjorie. I don't know. I'll ask mother. Ma, Mrs. Battles wants to know if you have any old port. She has a sore throat and wants some.

MRS. DUTTON. Old port? Ast her again; she can't mean old port.

MARJORIE. I know she said old port.

MRS. DUTTON. Port? Me have old port when I'm president of the W. C. T. U. and your pa run for Supervisor on the Prohibition ticket?

DANIEL. Yes, I did run, but it was against my constitution. Ask her if Jamaica ginger won't do.

MRS. DUTTON (*pushes MARJORIE away and takes receiver and shouts*). No, Minerva, we hain't got none, we never had none, and we won't never have none. (*Hangs up receiver*.)

MARJORIE (*starts to leave room*). I guess I'll go and make some fudge. Can I, ma?

MRS. DUTTON. No, indeed. I won't have you wasting sugar. Don't you make a drop of fudge. (*Exit MARJORIE*. MRS. DUTTON *runs to door and shouts*.) The cocoa is in the tin cupboard, and don't you think of using the illuminated skillet! (*Exit MRS. DUTTON*.)

MARJORIE (*comes to door and calls*). Daddy! Daddy darling, come and fix the fire!

DANIEL (*with alacrity*). O' course I will, honey. (*Exit*.)

CAROLINE (*draws chair near to THANKFUL, who takes up sewing and begins to work*). Frederick is in love with Marjorie. He told me so, and she has sent Reuben about his business.

THANKFUL. Indeed.

CAROLINE (*confidentially*). Didn't Mr. Dutton say that he had put a hundred dollars in the bank for Marjorie every birthday?

THANKFUL (*does not look up from work, speaks shortly*). He did.

CAROLINE. How old is she?

THANKFUL (*looking at CAROLINE in disgust*). She was seventeen the seventh day of last January.

CAROLINE. Seventeen hundred dollars.

MARJORIE (*calls from door*). Miss Fielding, the fudge is almost done. Won't you come and butter the tins?

CAROLINE. Yes, certainly. (*Exit*.)

Enter FREDERICK.

FREDERICK (*takes chair vacated by CAROLINE*). How fortunate. I find you alone at last.

THANKFUL. Alone, sir, but not lonely.

FREDERICK (*nervously*). I have long wanted an interview with you, Miss Thelander, and I should be thankful—that is, you would be thankful—I would be thankful if you—

THANKFUL (*interrupting scornfully*). Indeed, Mr. Fielding. Your sister has just told me your cause for thankfulness, and we won't discuss it.

FREDERICK. I told her not to mention it, but what do you think of it?

THANKFUL (*rising*). I think you are much too old.

FREDERICK. I am only forty-nine and I have never been in love before. (*Looks languishingly at THANKFUL*.)

THANKFUL. This, sir, does not interest me.

Enter WIMPIE WIGGINS, running.

WIMPIE. Say, teacher, Reuben Rogers is going away next Saturday on the three o'clock train to stay all winter.

FREDERICK (*walks to side of stage*). Plague take that young-one. She is always around when she is not wanted. (*Returns to chair near THANKFUL*.) Run home now, Wimpy, and I'll get you a new doll.

THANKFUL (*takes WIMPIE on her lap*). Stay right here, Wimpy, and I'll get you two dolls. What is this you say about Reuben?

WIMPIE (*rising and spreading out her arms*). Oh, Reuben is going away—way off. He is going to stay all winter, and maybe forever and never. (*Climbs back in THANKFUL's lap*.)

FREDERICK. I wonder what takes Reuben away. Just as he has started to build his new house and has bought those pure-bred cattle?

THANKFUL (*indignantly*). I shouldn't think you would need to ask. Poor boy. It is a shame! A wicked shame! I would have rather that Goose Hollow went without a telephone line forever than to have Reuben's heart broken.

FREDERICK (*perplexed*). What has the Goose Creek line

got to do with Reuben's heart? I saw him last night and he acted very cool. I couldn't think what was the matter.

THANKFUL. Well, if you can't guess, ask Marjorie.

Enter DANIEL, MRS. DUTTON and MARJORIE. MARJORIE carries plate of fudge, which she passes around. Each takes a piece except MRS. DUTTON. WIMPIE takes two.

MRS. DUTTON (*places hand on stomach*). No, thank you. My stummick don't feel just right. It sort of gnaws.

Knock at the door is heard. MRS. DUTTON goes to door and admits MRS. BATTLES.

MRS. DUTTON. Mr. Fieldin', this is the Widder Battles. Miss Fieldin', the same. (MRS. BATTLES greets both.) Minerva, this is the man that is putting in the line.

MRS. BATTLES. I suspicioned that it were. G'do, Daniel. (*Shakes hands.*) G'do, Marjorie. G'do, Wimpie Wiggins. You here? Now, miss, you can't have any supper.

WIMPIE. Didn't spect to have nothin' but separated milk and johnny-cake.

THANKFUL (*to CAROLINE*). This is the lady with whom I am going to board. Maybe she would take you also.

CAROLINE (*in an undertone*). Would it be a good place?

THANKFUL. Oh, yes; pretty good. (*To every one.*) Excuse me, please, I have some school papers to correct. (*Exit.*)

CAROLINE. Mrs. Battles, could you take my brother and myself to board for a week or two?

MRS. BATTLES. Yes, I'll take you for five dollars apiece.

MRS. DUTTON. No, Minerva, you won't charge them no five dollars a week. Three dollars is a plenty. And you must let Miss Fieldin' put her shirt waists in the wash, and let her have a hot flat whenever she wants it, and let her have a settee on the veranda. And remember they have to have cream and eggs and fresh fruit every meal.

DANIEL. And they are very fond of garden sass, too.

MARJORIE. You mean sauce, daddy.

MRS. BATTLES. If they board with me they will have to eat what is set before um. And say, Mary Ann, why did

you refuse to let me have a little piece of salt meat to bind on my throat?

ALL. Salt meat?

DANIEL (*rising and facing MRS. BATTLES. DANIEL and MRS. BATTLES occupy center front of stage.*) You foamed over—

MARJORIE (*interrupting*). You mean phone, daddy.

DANIEL (*pushes her aside*). You foamed over and asked for old port. (*Spells, making motions with finger for each letter.*) O-l-d, old; p-o-r-t, port; old port. And we hadn't none.

MRS. BATTLES (*fiercely*). I asked for old pork! (*Spelling with same gestures used by DANIEL.*) O-l-d, old; p-o-r-k, pork; old pork. Did you think that me, a deacon's daughter, and a preacher's widder, would be askin' for old port!

ALL. Oh, old pork! salt pork! (*All laugh.*)

WIMPIE (*very loud and pert*). She didn't have any sore throat. She wanted it to fry for dinner.

MRS. BATTLES (*seizes WIMPIE and shakes her, cuffs her ears and puts her out of the room, then addresses CAROLINE*). I'll take you to board at four fifty a week. (*To all.*) And the Social Circle meets with me next Saturday. And I want you all to come and all bring eatables and pay two shillings apiece for your suppers. You know we are raising money to buy the Grange table cloths.

WIMPIE *puts head in at door.*

WIMPIE (*shouts*). Come quick! Everybody! Miss Battles' turkeys are in Mr. Dutton's cornfield gobbling everything. (*All run from stage except MRS. BATTLES, who goes slowly out as curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: *Home of Widow BATTLES. Change the stage a little, but general furnishings may be the same.*

At rise MRS. BATTLES is discovered alone. She dusts a little and arranges the chairs.

MRS. BATTLES. There, I have mixed the bran and coffee half and half, and I've put in the sale-molasses, to give it color, and if that Wimpie didn't see me mixing them it will be all right, but no telling what will happen with her around; but after they hear my news they won't know whether they are drinking coffee or water. Bran and molasses won't signify or I'll miss my guess. Here they come now. (*Knock is heard. MRS. BATTLES goes to door.*)

Enter MRS. SMITH, MRS. WOODWARD, MRS. DRAKE and MRS. ALLEN. MRS. BATTLES greets all and seats them. They remove their wraps, which she carries from the stage. Each wears a white apron and has crochet work, tatting or other light work which they take up at once. MRS. BATTLES speaks of the weather, etc.

Enter CAROLINE.

MRS. BATTLES. Ladies, this is Miss Fielding, sister of the man who put in Goose Creek Line. Miss Fielding, this is Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Woodward, Mrs. Drake and Mrs. Allen, neighbors and Grangers. (*CAROLINE greets each as introduced. They shake hands.*)

Enter THANKFUL. She greets each by name and shakes hands.

MRS. SMITH. I'm glad that the schoolhouse is fixed. When are they going to have the donation party, Thankful?

THANKFUL. Next Monday night.

MRS. WOODWARD. Did Ernestine have her gogify lesson yesterday? Her father couldn't find some of the questions hisself.

THANKFUL. Yes, she had it.

MRS. DRAKE. I was sorry that I had to keep Louise out, but she didn't have any rubbers and it rained so.

MRS. ALLEN. I think it does children good to miss now and then a day, but the school law has got so interfering that you can't tell who your children belong to—yourself or the 'gov'munt.

THANKFUL. Yes, we all have to watch out for the school law. Have you seen Marjorie this week, Miss Fielding? I wonder why she and Mrs. Dutton don't come.

CAROLINE. No, I haven't seen any of the family since we came from there. My brother is coming from Buffalo with Mr. Dutton today, and he will be so disappointed if he doesn't see Marjorie.

MRS. BATTLES. I'm afraid that Marjorie won't see him right away.

CAROLINE (*rising*). Has anything happened to my brother?

Enter WIMPIE, dressed in white with ribbon on hair and good shoes and stockings.

THANKFUL. Or to Marjorie? Oh, has anything happened to dear little Marjorie?

MRS. BATTLES (*clasping hands and rolling up eyes*). I have some fearful news.

CAROLINE. Oh, is my brother dead?

WIMPIE. I hope he ain't dead, 'cause he promised me a doll and he ain't never got it neither.

MRS. BATTLES (*points finger at WIMPIE*). You set down, Miss, or I'll send you to bed.

WIMPIE (*very loudly*). You can't send me to bed 'cause there ain't none of the beds made up yet.

MRS. BATTLES (*takes WIMPIE by the shoulders and sits her down very decidedly*). I won't beat about the bush. Marjorie Dutton is stone blind.

ALL. Blind!

THANKFUL. I can't believe it. They would have sent for me.

MRS. BATTLES. I went to the phone last night and I heard Marjorie tell Mary Wilson that she was blind.

ALL (*exclaim*). Horrors! Mercy! Goodness! (*Let each say something. All talk at the same time.*)

THANKFUL. I don't believe it! You can't make me believe it!

MRS. BATTLES. Well, it is so. Marjorie is a rather uppity, high-headed piece, always interrupting her pa and dictating how he shall talk.

MRS. ALLEN. That is so. I was down there, and Daniel said that the lop-horned cow was the best critter on the farm, and Marjorie broke right in and said, "You mean creature, daddy." In my day a girl would have no more thought of interrupting her father than she would have thought of flying.

MRS. BATTLES. And besides she is vain, and her vanity has brought this calamity on her.

THANKFUL. Nonsense. She is a dear, good child. Now you tell us just what you heard.

MRS. BATTLES. Did you ever hear of anyone having their face enameled?

THANKFUL. Yes, I have, I have read about it. A white pigment is injected underneath the skin and the complexion always remains beautiful, but it is very dangerous.

MRS. BATTLES. Well, I understood Marjorie to tell Mary Wilson that she had had her face enameled, to surprise her father.

MRS. WOODWARD. I guess it will surprise him all right.

MRS. BATTLES. Yes, she said, "I wanted to surprise daddy." And she said something about twenty dollars. So I suppose it cost twenty dollars. And she said the word blind several times and I was determined to find out if it was so, and as soon as I got the dishes done I put on my sunbonnet and went right down there, and I crept up and peeked into the winder, and there lay Marjorie on the kitchen settee, with a white cloth over her eyes, and there was Mary Ann a setting by the stove lookin' pretty mauger, and I just turned around and came home as fast as I could canter.

THANKFUL (*rising and pointing at Mrs. BATTLES*). You

did? You went down there and saw your best friends in great trouble and just galloped away? Why didn't you go in and see if you couldn't help? Why didn't you tell me last night? Now who else have you told?

MRS. BATTLES. I told Jake Jackson's folks, and Jake is going down to the depot and meet Dan Dutton and tell him the sad news.

THANKFUL. You ought not to have told anyone. I shall go right down there and see what is in this.

MRS. DRAKE. I am afraid, Thankful, there is something in it, for I heard Mary Wilson ask Frances Waite last night if she had heard about Marjorie. I thought it was our ring or I wouldn't have listened, and I didn't just hear what Frances said, but I heard the word blind, and I certainly heard Mary say twenty dollars. And that night about nine o'clock I know that John was just winding the clock and I was putting out the cat, when all of a sudden the phone rang, and it was ourn, and I went to the phone all of a tremble because it was so late at night, after nine. And I was afraid that some one was sick, and it was Mary Ann Dutton and she said: "Have you got any Pettit's eye salve?" And I said, "No." And she hung up without saying good-bye, but I didn't mistrust nothing.

MRS. WOODWARD. Well, come to think, I heard Frances talking to the minister and she said will you please get some one to wait on table in Marjorie Dutton's place at the donation? And he said, "Why?" And Frances said, "She is afraid she can't come."

MRS. ALLEN. Did you hear that? I heard it too and I thought that Frances said something about pies, but it must have been eyes. Oh, what is this world a comin' to? (*Shakes head.*)

MRS. SMITH. Well, Dan Dutton has just spoilt that girl anyway, lettin' her wear silk stockings and flaunting a gold necklace every day, and, as Minerva says, she is vain, and her vanity has brought its own reward.

MRS. DRAKE. And Mary Ann is just as bad; lets her wear white aprons every day. When I was a girl if I had

a white apron for Sundays I thought I was right in town. And say it is such a coincidence. I heard the same talk and I was a good mind to call up Mary Ann and ask why Marjorie couldn't wait on table. Well, it is a terrible calamity and it has come into our midst and we must be resigned. (*Shakes her head. All sigh and groan. Meanwhile THANKFUL looks out of the window.*)

MRS. WOODWARD. Well, one thing, maybe Reuben Rogers will take time to look at some of the other girls now.

MRS. ALLEN (*excitedly*). Oh, let me tell you. I heard Reuben's mother tell Mrs. Jackson that some busybody had made trouble between Reuben and Marjorie and that Reuben is going to Chicago to work. She said that his pa had talked to him and she had talked to him and tried to git him to stay, but that he had turned off the carpenters who were working on his new house and was going Saturday.

WIMPIE. That is today. He is going on the three o'clock train.

CAROLINE. Then he'll start in less than half an hour for it is twenty-five minutes to three now.

MRS. SMITH. I heard the last of that conversation myself and Mrs. Rogers said that they couldn't do nothing with Reuben. He would go.

WIMPIE. I seen Marjorie's ma leading her in the garden and her eyes was done up.

MRS. ALLEN. And say. Andrew stopped there yesterday to borrow a corn cutter and he seen Marjorie with blue goggles on, but he thought maybe she was wearing them to be stylish, so he didn't ask any questions.

MRS. BATTLES. Now, Miss Thankful, maybe you will believe it after all this evidence. Marjorie Dutton is *stone blind!*

MRS. DRAKE. What a blessing the telephone is. We wouldn't have known a thing about this if we hadn't happened to hear it over the phone. What would we do without the Goose Creek Line?

CAROLINE. Well, if she is blind my brother won't marry her. (*All look at CAROLINE in surprise.*)

THANKFUL (*from window*). Here they come! Here come Mr. Dutton and Mr. Fielding.

Enter DANIEL and FREDERICK. DANIEL in good business suit with derby hat rather large for him, FREDERICK looking as fine and well dressed as possible. They greet no one.

DANIEL (*excitedly*). What is this story about my girl being blind? Not that I believe it, but I want to know where the story started from. Jake Jackson met me at the station and told me that my Marjorie was blind, and he told me to stop here and get the full particulars.

CAROLINE. Marjorie had her face enameled and it has made her blind.

FREDERICK (*loudly*). What sort of foolish babble is this?

DANIEL. I don't know what 'nameling anybody's face would be like, but I can tell you one thing, if Marjorie's ma caught her putting even corn starch on her face she would skin her alive. (*Exit WIMPIE on a run.*)

MRS. BATTLES. Well, she's done it and she has spent twenty dollars for it, and it has made her blind!

DANIEL (*takes off his hat, takes out red handkerchief and wipes his forehead, returns hat to head and groans*). Oh, it can't be possible! My dear little Marjorie!

THANKFUL. Now, Mr. Dutton, I don't believe this. I was just going down there when you came.

FREDERICK. Mrs. Battles, how do you know that Marjorie is blind?

MRS. BATTLES (*points to phone*). I heard it over the Goose Creek Line.

DANIEL. Did Mary Ann foam over and tell you that Marjorie was blind?

MRS. BATTLES. No; but I heard Marjorie talking to Mary Wilson last night and she told Mary that she was blind; that she had had her face enameled and it cost twenty dollars, that she had intended to surprise you, and I seen her myself with her eyes bandaged lying on the

kitchen settee, and Wimpie saw Mary Ann leading her in the garden.

FREDERICK. Do I understand that you deliberately listened to a conversation not meant for your ears?

MRS. BATTLES. Well, I heard what I said I did, and Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Woodward and Nancy Allen and Mrs. Drake heard things, too. They heard Mary tell Frances Waite that Marjorie couldn't go to the donation, and Mary Ann tried to borry Pettit's Eye Salve of Mrs. Drake. Didn't she, Mrs. Drake?

MRS. DRAKE. She did.

MRS. BATTLES. And they all heard about enamelin' and all heard the word blind. And what hurt did it do? The truth is bound to come out.

FREDERICK (*steps to phone, takes down directory and reads in a loud, firm tone.*) "Any person who wrongfully obtains, or attempts to obtain, any knowledge of a message not intended for them, or who wilfully divulges what is heard by accident, is subject to a fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment, for not more than two years, or by both such fine and imprisonment. Extract from Section 552 of the penal law. Chapter 40 of the consolidated laws. (*Closes book, hangs it up and looks sternly at MRS. BATTLES.*)

DANIEL. You ought to be fined and shut up both. If you have to pay a thousand dollar fine I guess it will take a little of your turkey money.

MRS. BATTLES (*shakes finger in DANIEL's face*). You can't get me arrested to save your life. Lem Lincoln is the constable and I've got a mortgage on his hull propity.

THANKFUL (*looking out door*). Oh, here comes Mrs. Dutton and Marjorie now, and, yes, there is something the matter. They are walking slowly and Marjorie is wearing dark glasses. Oh, the poor child!

Enter MRS. DUTTON. *Wears dark skirt, coat and sunbonnet.* MARJORIE *wears pretty out-of-doors costume, no hat and wears large dark blue glasses.* MRS. DUTTON *removes sunbonnet and gazes at DANIEL in surprise.*

THANKFUL. Oh, Marjorie, what has happened?

CAROLINE. Poor Marjorie. We all know that you have done wrong, very wrong.

MRS. BATTLES. And you was led on by vanity. (*Points finger at MARJORIE.*)

CAROLINE. And now my brother will have to give you up.

FREDERICK (*looks at his sister in surprise*). Give up whom? (MRS. SMITH, MRS. WOODWARD, MRS. DRAKE and MRS. ALLEN *rise and stand at back of stage*. DANIEL *goes and puts arm about MARJORIE.*)

DANIEL. Yes, by hollyhock! What do you mean? Now, Marjorie, tell dad what is the matter?

MRS. DUTTON. I know I ought never to have let her done it, Daniel, but she teased and teased.

CAROLINE. Be that as it may, Frederick won't think of marrying a blind woman.

MRS. DUTTON. Marry? Who talks of marrying here? What is all this fuss about, anyway? Daniel, you go 'long home. Your supper is on the table and you've got baked beans, pickles and cheese, corn bread, custard pie and apple butter, and after you have et you feed the cat.

FREDERICK. Let me say right here that there has been a great mistake. I never thought of—

THANKFUL. Oh, I never thought you would be so mercenary.

. Enter REUBEN and WIMPIE *on a run*. REUBEN *well dressed and carries bag and umbrella*.

WIMPIE (*very loudly*). Here we be! I grabbed him by the coat-tail just as he clum onto the train. Didn't I, Reuben? (*Looks up at REUBEN.*)

REUBEN (*smiling*). You did. I can swear to that.

MRS. BATTLES. You'll be punished for this, Wimpy. Why did you race off after Reuben?

WIMPIE. I heard you say that Marjorie was blind, and Mr. Dutton said that her ma was a-going to skin her alive, and I just cut and run for Reuben.

REUBEN. And she got me, too.

WIMPIE. It was just three o'clock by the station time when I ran through the depot. The train was just a ding-donging to start and I grabbed Reuben and yanked him down and the train went, and he said, "What do you think this is? Old Home Week?" And I said, "No; but Marjorie is blind and her ma is going to skin her alive."

REUBEN (*goes and stands near MARJORIE*). Marjorie, what is the matter? Wimpy said you were blind, and Jake Jackson said you were blind, but right here I want this understood. Whatever is the matter of your eyes, blind or not blind, I feel toward you just as I always did. It will make no difference to me.

FREDERICK (*slaps REUBEN on the shoulder*). Good work, my boy; good work. But I don't believe she is blind.

MARJORIE (*removes glasses*). Blind? Of course I am not blind. Who said I was blind?

MRS. BATTLES. You said so yourself with your own mouth. You phoned to Mary Wilson last night that you had had your face enameled, that it had cost twenty dollars, and that it had made you blind.

MARJORIE. Oh, no, Mrs. Battles; I never told her that.

MRS. BATTLES. Yes, you did. I heard you with my own ears. (*DANIEL has arm about MARJORIE. FREDERICK goes and stands by THANKFUL. WIMPIE stands between them.*)

MRS. DUTTON. Now, Minerva, let me tell you just how it was. You all know that Daniel went to Buffalo with a carload of cattle to sell. (*All nod.*) And I told you that we were going to have the blinds painted. Well, Marjorie teased and teased to paint them herself and save the twenty dollars that we would have paid the painter, so as to surprise her pa.

MARJORIE. So I painted them with white enamel, and the turpentine or something in the paint affected my eyes and made them very painful. And I told Mary Wilson about it over the phone.

MRS. BATTLES. Yesterday I sent Wimpie down the road after the turkeys.

WIMPIE. No, Mrs. Battles, you sent me to drive them into Mr. Dutton's oats 'cause he was gone away.

DANIEL (*laughing*). Never mind, Wimp; you keep still and let Marjorie tell it.

MARJORIE. There is nothing more to tell. I could see as well as ever, but my eyes ached all the time, and mother bathed them in witch hazel, and part of the time I have worn a bandage on them, and then I wear the glasses because they still trouble me. I phoned some of the girls about it. That is all.

WIMPIE. If you wasn't blind why did your mother lead you in the garden?

MARJORIE. Oh, she just happened to lead me. We often go hand-in-hand. We went to see a late rose on my bush.

MRS. BATTLES. I don't see that I am a bit to blame. I made a very natural mistake. I simply heard the words, white enamel, twenty dollars, and blind, and I had been reading about a woman who had her face enameled, and I just jumped at conclusions.

REUBEN. And it must have been some jump.

CAROLINE. And you came near making my brother lose his young bride.

FREDERICK. I would like to say a few words. My sister has put me in a rather unfavorable light before you all. I am old enough to be Marjorie's father, and I am sure she never thought of marrying me. I never wanted but one bride (*takes THANKFUL's hand*) and that is Miss Thankful Thelander. I didn't intend to propose in so large a crowd, Thankful, but—but—I'll be thankful if you'll have me.

CAROLINE. And I thought it was Marjorie he wanted.

DANIEL. By Hector and Grandma! I'm hungry. I wouldn't be so scared for the best yoke of steers in my pasture. Come on, Ma. Come on, everybody! Let's go down to our house.

MRS. BATTLES (*takes DANIEL by the arm*). No, Daniel;

you must all stay and eat supper here and pay two shillings toward the Grange tablecloths.

DANIEL. I'm so glad that my girl ain't blind that I'll pay for the whole shooting match, and we'll foam right over after them now.

MARJORIE. You mean phone, daddy.

THANKFUL. And I want you to promise me one thing, Frederick.

FREDERICK. I'll promise you anything in the world.

THANKFUL. That is that we shall adopt Wimpie Wiggins.

REUBEN. Marjorie, I will make them change the name of the line. We won't have Goose Creek Line. You can have any old name you want.

MARJORIE. I don't want it changed, Reuben. I just love the name Goose Creek Line, and I want everything to be just as it used to be.

FREDERICK. Wait a minute and I'll call up the *Daily Bugle* and have them announce the engagement of the four of us. (*Rings.*) Hello! *Daily Bugle*, please. Is this the *Daily Bugle*? Will you please in an early issue announce the engagements of Frederick Fielding and Miss Thankful Thelander and Mr. Reuben Rogers and Miss Marjorie Dutton. Both marriages to take place in the near future. (*Hangs up receiver.*)

MRS. BATTLES. Now about the supper. If Daniel is agreeable to buying the tablecloths for the Grange out of his own pocket, we may as well all go down to Mary Ann's to supper.

DANIEL. I'll pay for them and get the best in the store. Come on, everybody, down to our house and get a drink of buttermilk. (*Exit all except WIMPIE and REUBEN and MARJORIE. DANIEL and MRS. DUTTON arm-in-arm, FREDERICK and THANKFUL ditto; then CAROLINE and MRS. BATTLES; then MRS. ALLEN, MRS. WOODWARD, MRS. SMITH and MRS. DRAKE. DANIEL from off stage, shouts loudly.*) Come on, Reuben and Marjorie, and git a drink of buttermilk.

REUBEN. Yes, let us drink a bumper of buttermilk to the continued ringing of the Goose Creek Line. (*Exit REUBEN and MARJORIE. WIMPIE climbs into a chair and rings phone till the curtain is down.*)

CURTAIN.

The Royal Highway

By CHARLES ULRICH.

Price, 25 Cents

A comedy-drama in 4 acts; 8 males, 3 females. Time, 2½ hours. **Scenes:** 3 interiors. **Characters:** Arthur Morgan, a lawyer. Charles Williams, a mine superintendent. Bill Hampton, a political boss. Harry Felton, a clerk. Horace Allen, a secretary. Rev. Jordan, a Methodist minister. Jimmy Farrell, an ex-convict. Sam Harrison, a detective. Margaret Ames, known as Miss Holmes. Lucy Matthews, a stenographer. Mrs. Mary Jones, president of the Ladies' Aid Society.

SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—The game of modern politics. The bribe. Morgan defies a political boss. "I'll crush you like I would a fly!" An anonymous philanthropist. The compact and avowal of love. The robbery and accusation. Margaret saves Morgan's honor. "No. it was Providence!"

Act II.—"I wish I had a millionaire friend like Miss Ames!" Farrell butts in. "Youse is playing a game of hearts what ain't in your contract." Williams divides the spoils. Margaret defies Williams, "Where did you get that money?" A villain's kiss and punishment. The power of attorney. "You'll be at my feet crying for mercy!"

Act III.—"Who is this anonymous philanthropist?" "The New York police are looking for you!" The tables turned. "I'll get your measure all right!" The story of Morgan's sorrow. "I could not forgive the woman who deceived me!" The nomination and accusation. Margaret's joy. "You are indeed a man among men!"

Act IV.—"This suspense is driving me mad!" The letter. "I'm on the track of the man who killed my sister!" The convict's secret. "Williams was my pal in Sing Sing!" Margaret reveals herself. "Gee! She's an iceberg!" "How little you know of true love!" Williams pays the penalty of treachery. Harry's promotion. On the royal highway.

Re-Taming of the Shrew

By JOHN W. POSTGATE.

Price, 25 Cents

Humorous Shakespearean travesty in one act; 6 males, 5 females. Time, about 45 minutes. One simple interior scene. **Characters:** Petruchio, Angelo, Duke of Illyria, Othello, Macbeth, Grumio, Katherine, Mariana, Viola, Desdemona and Lady Macbeth. **Plot:** After her woeful honeymoon, Katherine becomes an ardent suffragist and imposes household duties on Petruchio, who submits to petticoat government. At a meeting of the women, man's doom as a political or domestic power is announced. The women return to Petruchio's home to find their husbands having a high old time. A lively controversy ensues but the men win the day when they threaten to appeal to the divorce courts. This travesty draws material from "Taming of the Shrew," "Measure for Measure," "Twelfth Night," "Othello" and "Macbeth." It retains many of the original lines from the plays, yet most ingeniously devised to fit the conditions of today. Costumes either Shakespearean or modern. Especially recommended for schools, colleges, etc. Replete with humor and should please any good club or society.

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The Deacon Entangled

By HARRY OSBORNE.

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy in 3 acts; 6 males, 4 females. Time, 2 hours. **Scene:** 1 interior. **Characters:** Deacon Penrose, a member in good standing. Calvin, his nephew. Rev. Sopher, a supporter of foreign missions. Harry Baxter, a sporting writer. Rafferty, a policeman. A Plain Clothes Man. Mrs. Penrose. Ruth, her daughter. Georgie, Rev. Sopher's daughter. Katy, a maid.

SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—In which the Deacon finds himself in a tight corner. Dr. Sopher, who can coax money out of a wooden Indian. A thousand dollars for the new pipe organ. Cal arrives. A clean-up-clouter instead of a ministerial prospect. "Did I forget my necktie and button my collar in the back?" The Deacon spends a night out. "We won't go home until morning."

Act II.—The raid on the gambling joint. "Why didn't you jump when I told you?" On bail. "A thousand dollars to the Doc or you lose your job as Deacon; a thousand to the judge or six months." A sporting chance. Ready for the game. A donation to Foreign Missions and a double barreled courtship. The elopement. The arrest. "Come on Cal, I'll see you through."

Act III.—The big game. Tied in the Tenth. Cal goes to the box. A Pinch Hitter. "Over the scoreboard." On the Deacon's trail—the Horse pistol—pay the fine or go to jail. A hair line finish. "Hold on, Copper." "Here's your thousand and here's your girl. Look happy and have your picture taken." A new son-in-law. "Bother Boarding School." The Deacon smiles.

A Trial of Hearts

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price, 25 Cents

College comedy in 4 acts; 6 males, 18 females. Time, 2½ hours. **Scenes:** 3 interiors, 1 exterior. **Characters:** Dudley Van Antwerp, a wealthy college man. Philip, his best friend. Roger, Teddy, Jack and Jerry, fraternity men. Mrs. Van Antwerp, of great importance. Honor, Dudley's wife. Fourteen lively sorority girls. A chaperone and a maid.

SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Gretchen and Jerry play Romeo and Juliet. Ted pleads the cause of Kappa Psi. Jack argues for Delta Chi. Dudley introduces Honor to his mother. Virginia learns of Dudley's marriage. "I want to go home—oh, I want to go home!"

Act II.—The football enthusiasts bring news of Barbara. Gretchen and Jerry study Latin and argue fraternity. Honor finds it all a little strange. Dudley tells Virginia his love story. "Oh, Dudley, you hurt me!" "There's nothing left for me but to go away!"

Act III.—"I wonder if people ever get too busy to care!" Mrs. Van Antwerp opens fire and Honor stands her ground. "I mean to stay!" "I wish I had no heart—it aches so!" "Dear little girl, it is good-bye." Honor hears Dudley declare his love for Virginia. "Oh, Dad-Dad—your little girl is coming home!"

Act IV.—Gretchen and Jerry "grow up." The Seniors toast the past, the present and the future. Mrs. Van Antwerp reproaches herself. "Here comes the bride." The Kappa Psis and the Delta Chi holds reunions. "Honor, is it really you?" "If you want me, I am here."

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Not a Man in the House, 40 m. 5	
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Patsy O'Wang, 35 min.... 4	3
Pat, the Apothecary, 35 min... 6	2
Persecuted Dutchman, 30 min. 6	3
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